

Mayor's Message – November

The Eyre family is one of the many multi-generational families that live in Murray. In 1920 my grandparents purchased a home on Wasatch Drive, just a few blocks from our existing City Hall site. The house was about halfway down the street and directly across from the existing Catholic Church. That home was always referred to as "Grandma Eyre's house." Shortly after my grandfather's passing, my grandmother moved to a small, one bedroom apartment, just above what is now the Desert Star Theater. At that time they were referred to, as the Iris Apartments. When I used to visit her in the early 1950s, below the apartment was a J.C. Penney's store and the Iris Theater. That single screen theater originally hosted silent movies, but then became the first theater in Murray to offer sound. There was then, and still is, a wonderfully rich history to our downtown. I remember my older sister taking me by the hand, and we would go downstairs and outside on State Street where we would go window shopping, before going down the street to the Murray Theater. As a five-year-old boy, I have fond memories of that theater which still stands as a landmark in our city. You might imagine what a thrill it was for me to stand once again in its lobby, some 65 years later, as we put together the deal for the city to buy this theater, to preserve its historical significance. Since becoming your Mayor, I have often walked up and down this area of State Street and realized that it hasn't changed much from the time I was a little boy.

During the past 30 years, there have been many plans to revitalize our downtown area. Murray City has arranged several companies to put together a blueprint of what could become a vision for our downtown. Inevitably the plans were unable to move forward. The timing or the economy was just not right. However, in the meantime, our elected officials and city personnel were not only patient, but prudent. Plans were made to acquire land and save money, so that when the time was right, we could proceed to bring vitality and life back to this area.

Unlike many other cities in the Salt Lake Valley, Murray is very fortunate to have an established historical downtown presence, which many of us remember as being the social center of the city. The timing is now right, to where we can change our downtown area, to once again be the center of our city and the gathering place for our residents.

One of the key components of this revitalization is the building of a new City Hall. In the early 1930s, Arlington Elementary was built on State Street. It served the city well as a great learning center for nearly 50 years. In the early 1980s, Murray purchased, renovated and converted the building into The City Center Building. To this end, it has served for an additional 34 years. Now, well over 85 years old, we have the opportunity to build a new City Hall that will act as a catalyst to reinvigorate our entire downtown area and serve our city for decades to come. It will be large enough to

accommodate our Justice Court and many of our public services offices, along with a community/innovation center. Because of Murray's historic financial responsibility, it can be built without raising property taxes while at the same time making valuable State Street property available for commercial development.

We look forward to the coming months where we can share with you many of the exciting possibilities in renewing our downtown area, while at the same time retaining the charm and character that has made Murray, "A City Without Equal."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ted Eyre". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ted" and last name "Eyre" clearly distinguishable.

Ted Eyre, Mayor